

# THE DEMOCRATIC VISION ON NATIONAL SECURITY

September, 2005- Volume 1



## DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS TASK FORCE ON DEFENSE AND MILITARY PERSONNEL

A Series of Commentaries from Democratic House Leaders  
on National Security and Military Issues

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# DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

## U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Robert Menendez, Chairman  
James E. Clyburn, Vice Chair

September 14, 2005

Dear Democratic Colleague,

This is the first in a series of national security commentaries by the Democratic Caucus Task Force on Defense and Military Personnel. Future articles will offer provocative and substantive views by Democrats on how to ensure that our military remains the strongest, smartest and the most powerful in the world.

America faces deep, immediate threats. Our security is at risk from terrorists, states that support them, and the proliferation of weapons that can cause unimaginable, massive destruction. We are also threatened by less obvious foes such as the proliferation of deadly disease, failing states and the spread of anti-Americanism.

Our task in Congress, the military, defense community and academia—is to figure out how to win the future. And if we're going to win, we have to understand the rules, or what the rules are not. We have to understand how profoundly the rules have changed.

To understand how quickly things are changing, we must appreciate that even the analogies, even the metaphors are changing almost week by week. One prominent speaker, who was addressing the Democratic Study Group on National Security, which was created to help Democratic members explore new thinking, new ideas, new strategies and new solutions for national security, used the following analogy to describe the challenges we are up against. He said,

“Congressmen, Americans think of war like a football game. One side is on offense and the other side is on defense. Then offense goes on defense, and defense goes on offense. You have rules. You have regulations. You have boundaries. You have halftimes and timeouts, called truces and ceasefires. You break the rules, you get penalized. If you don't play by the rules, then you don't get to play.” “But that's a 20<sup>th</sup> century war. 21<sup>st</sup> century war is really like a hockey game: fast and briskly paced, sliding all over the place, one second you're on offense, the next second on defense and you don't even know it; and there are international referees standing by helplessly as simultaneous random violence erupts.”


However, not soon afterwards, another analyst explained, “Even that's antiquated.” He said our national security policies, doctrine and strategies have been based on a different kind of football analogy. Imagine we're the Washington Redskins and every Sunday we


play football but we always play against the NY Giants. Every Sunday: Redskins vs. the Giants. Sixteen Sundays a season, every season, season after season, Redskins play the Giants. We know their players, their coaches, and their playbook. We know how they play and how they think. We know their strengths, their weaknesses, their capabilities, and we know how to exploit them. And then one Sunday we show up to play the Giants. We're dressed to play football against the Giants. We're prepared to play by the rules of football against the Giants. We trained that week to play football against the Giants. And guess what? When we show up that Sunday, the NY Islanders hockey team is waiting to play us in a game of ice hockey. And the week after that it's a game of tidily-winks, only the rules of tidily-winks have changed and no one told us.

That is the future of warfare: new rules; no rules. The only thing that is predictable is that the unpredictable will happen. So here is the challenge: how do we equip ourselves to adjust to the new realities of not knowing who we are playing, where we are playing, how we are playing, when we are playing, or what rules our opponents are playing by?

The following commentaries by Members of Congress are suggested solutions to these 21<sup>st</sup> century threats. They exemplify how American security can be built on a foundation of values that Americans and Democrats have long upheld.

Sincerely,

  
Bob Menendez  
Chairman,  
House Democratic Caucus

  
Steve Israel  
Chairman, Task Force on Defense  
and Military Personnel

## **Professional Military Education Must Evolve With the Warfighter**

### **U.S. Rep. Ike Skelton**

“The nation that will insist on drawing a broad line of demarcation between the fighting man and the thinking man is liable to find its fighting done by fools and its thinking done by cowards.”

Sir William Francis Butler

It is a privilege to serve as the Ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee. Under Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States, Congress is charged with the responsibility “to raise and support Armies.” This is a responsibility that members of the Armed Services Committee and all other Members of Congress take very seriously. Today, Congress must provide the military with the resources to transform while simultaneously fighting two wars: the war against the insurgency in Iraq, and the global war on terrorism. To that end, there are a few things in which I will take a personal interest during the coming year as I continue to fulfill our Constitutional obligation.

First, I will continue to call for an increase in military end strength, as I have done for the past ten years. I am pleased that the Fiscal Year 2006 National Defense Authorization Act increased our force levels, particularly the Army and the Marine Corps, but I’m not sure the bill goes far enough. If in the future the demand for our forces is not as great, we can address that then. What we cannot do is create soldiers out of thin air in the middle of an unexpected crisis. Since the wars we are fighting are likely to continue for quite some time, the way to ensure readiness is to add more soldiers to the rotation mix.

Second, I believe that the defense budget needs to reflect the demands currently being placed on our military. Right now, day-to-day operations are dependent upon the timely arrival of emergency funds outside the normal budgeting process. These requirements are not going away any time soon. We must deliver what is needed for success on the battlefield in a more methodical way, subject to the full oversight of the Congressional authorizing committees. Accounting for these requirements in the regular budget is a responsible and a more certain way to ensure that our forces have what they need over the long haul.

Third, I plan to continue to emphasize the importance of professional military education for officers and non-commissioned officers alike. Professional military education is one of our security establishment’s most important assets and has contributed to making the U.S. military the greatest force in history. I know that the Secretary of Defense has examined whether we need to modify our professional military education process during this period of crisis, but the Joint Staff and the Services properly responded that there was no room to reduce requirements and still prepare our officers for the future. I think Mr. Rumsfeld understands that, now. Still, the Army Chief of Staff has felt he must pull a

few people out of the War College and other schools early or defer them entirely to support the war effort. I am watching this development very closely.

As I see it, we have two missions: to fight this war and to prepare for the next. The professional military education system sustained our war-fighting competency during the years between World War I and World War II. Men like Troy Middleton, who went on to command an Army corps during the Battle of the Bulge, spent years in the school system, studying the art and science of war. Warfare is becoming more complex, and as soldiers at every level are taking on more decision-making responsibility, our professional military education system must continue to evolve to develop the thinking warriors the future will require.

The way military career timelines are managed now, we cannot just add educational requirements without relieving some of the other demands on service members' time. Reconciling this tension between professional education and other assignments required for career development will eventually require a fundamental reassessment of what a military career means and how success is measured. But that's in the long run. Right now, I'm worried about getting our forces to the right school at the right time and giving them the chance to get the most from that opportunity.

**Protecting America in an Era of Terror**  
**A Democratic Vision to Guarantee America's Security**  
**U.S. Rep. Jane Harman**

The quadruple bombing in the heart of London and the ongoing violence in Iraq provide the context -- and the urgency -- to evaluate our nation's effort to fight terrorism.

Democrats will guarantee America's security with a strong, robust national security policy that understands the enemy we face.

First, the threat has changed.

On 9/11, Al Qaeda was a centralized organization operating out of Afghanistan and directing terrorist operations around the world. Today, our brave men and women have done an excellent job breaking the back of the Al Qaeda leadership in Afghanistan.

But the threat has morphed into a decentralized, global network of radical Islamist cells that do not need Bin Laden's permission to strike. They are Bin Laden-inspired, but do not take directions from Al Qaeda headquarters. This new threat can be called "franchise terrorism."

Franchise terrorism is spreading -- across Asia, Africa, and as we have seen, into the heart of Europe.

Combating this terrorist threat requires excellent intelligence and a truly global effort, working with our allies.

Second, this is not a traditional "war."

President Bush insists on calling this a "war on terror." He even refers to Iraq as the "central front" in that war.

But the enemy we face is not a finite enemy, confined to a finite battlefield. Military power is vital to confront terrorist threats and terror states, and military force must always be on the table. But we need to use every tool in the toolkit to confront extremism and promote freedom.

Instead of calling this a "war," we should think of this as an Era of Terror. Victory in an Era of Terror will require an integrated strategy of military power, intelligence, homeland defense, diplomacy, economic leverage, and the enduring power of our ideals.

Third, we must win the argument with the next generation.

Hardened terrorists need to be stopped before they do us harm. But the real threat is the millions of young Arabs and Muslims around the world who the terrorists seek to attract to their cause.

America must win the argument for the hearts and minds of this next generation. Winning the argument means demonstrating that our promise of freedom and liberty is not a façade – that it is our true nature. To do this, we must undo the damage done by Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay, which have become moral black eyes for America.

We must also win the argument by building jobs and promoting literacy across the Arab and Muslim worlds. In the next 5 years, the Middle East will have to create 80 million jobs. This Administration has done too little on this front.

Democrats should be proud of our record of promoting policies to protect America.

The goal is to prevent and disrupt attacks, and that requires actionable, accurate and timely intelligence. Intelligence is the tip of the spear in an Era of Terror.

Democrats can be proud that our bill to reform the Intelligence Community was the blueprint for the bipartisan 9/11 Commission's recommendations and signed into law by the president last year.



**Giving our Soldiers the Brains and Brawn Needed to Keep  
America Safe  
U.S. Rep. Steve Israel**

One of the major concerns that I have is that we continue to view the world as a series of 20<sup>th</sup> century challenges that can be solved with 20<sup>th</sup> century technologies, 20<sup>th</sup> century strategies, 20<sup>th</sup> century tactics, 20<sup>th</sup> century doctrines, and 20<sup>th</sup> century thinking. That is an excellent prescription for winning a war in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. And that is a prescription for disaster.

Our task in Congress, the military, defense community and academia—is to figure out how to win the future, the challenge is to figure out how to give our soldiers both the brains and brawn to overcome the challenges we will face.

This question is not new and the answers are really quite timeless and unchanging. As Robert Kaplan tells us in one of my favorite books, *Warrior Politics*, the answers are as ancient as the very first battle on the very first battlefield. When someone created a sword, someone else created a shield. When the sword got more precise, the shield got bigger, stronger and harder. The answers were given to us by Sun Tzu, Thucydides, Clausewitz, and Machiavelli. First, know your enemy. Second, know your ground. Third, know that even when you think you know your enemy and your ground, both will be adapted and change. The more high-tech we go, the more low-tech they get. The more precise we get, the more they disperse.

Who would have believed that I would, as a Member of Congress, have to enter the living room of a constituent and express my profound sorrow that they lost their son in Iraq to garage door opener technologies while riding in a Humvee that had GPS technology and a laptop?

The question, the real question, then is how do we exploit the lessons of the past to secure a safer future. And here are the specific solutions I and others are pursuing.

It is not just about a technology transformation, it's about a cognitive transformation. We must give our warriors the right technologies to go to war. We also have to give them the critical skills and education to help them to think in new environments. We give them exquisite situational awareness: the position of the enemy, the speed of the enemy, the range of the enemy, but what they need more of is cultural awareness. They need to know the firepower of the enemy, but also the willpower of the enemy and the intent of the enemy.

Or, as General Sanchez told me when I met with him in Baghdad, "We really need to do a better job of understanding the cultures we are diving into."

To accomplish that goal, we must do the following.

First, improve professional military education by revising curriculums to address 21<sup>st</sup> century military challenges, stress foreign-language proficiency (particularly Arab and Chinese) and expand understanding of cultures, counterinsurgency and post-conflict operations.

Second, we can reverse declining retention rates by making graduate studies available in return for extended studies. The military services are being challenged to retain sufficient numbers of junior and mid-grade officers. The Army, in particular, is below required inventory for majors and senior captains. Providing opportunities in advanced civil schooling for officers would contribute a great deal to the professional development of senior military officers.

Thirdly, we should remove the obstacles to military careers in civil affairs, psychological operations and foreign-area studies. Our combatant commanders need professionals to help guide them through uncertain, post-conflict environments. They also need personnel to help with interagency and non-governmental-organization coordination. We have to structure our military so that it is capable of preemptive strategies, but also thoughtful post-conflict operations.

When I went to Iraq I visited Ad-Dwar, where I peered into the darkness of the spider hole, where we found Saddam Hussein. Only a few weeks before, a small group of American soldiers had found that hole, buried under a mat, covered by brush. They found it not just with high technology, not just with hardware. They found it by using their software: intuition, instinct, skill, innovation, training, and their ability to communicate with others - their cultural awareness. One soldier walking near that hole felt his boots rub against something and he said to himself, "That shouldn't be there, it doesn't make sense." He literally removed Saddam Hussein from that hole and removed a threat from the world stage.

Sadly, but realistically, the world ahead will be filled with other Husseins, and bin Laden's, and Zarqawis. Our job is to give the world U.S. soldiers with the hardware and the software to find them and remove them and give people opportunities to replace them with something better.